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Is Lyndon LaRouche using *your* name?

How the LaRouchians masquerade as journalists to gain information

by PATRICIA LYNCH

Last fall, presidential candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., suffered a double defeat at the hands of a federal jury in Alexandria, Virginia. His $150 million libel suit against NBC — which had aired two reports that charged, among other things, that LaRouche was the leader of a violence-prone, anti-Semitic cult that smeared its opponents and sued its critics — was rejected. Perhaps more significant, the jury ordered LaRouche to pay $3 million to NBC on the network's counterclaim that LaRouche and his followers had played "dirty tricks" on the network and had interfered with its newsgathering activities by, for example, impersonating NBC reporters and producers. While this was by no means the first time that the LaRouchians, as his followers are commonly called, had been detected posing as reporters and members of TV camera crews, it was the first time that a jury had weighed the evidence regarding such activities and imposed punitive damages on LaRouche. (LaRouche has appealed the libel verdict in *LaRouche* v. *NBC*, and has moved to set aside the counterclaim.)

As I testified at the trial, my first encounter with LaRouchian dirty tricks occurred on January 30, 1984. As the producer of a report on LaRouche for NBC's now-defunct *First Camera* program, I was filming LaRouche's residence in Leesburg, Virginia. While correspondent Mark Nykanen was doing a "stand up," my associate producer, Kathleen Paterno, and I saw one of LaRouche's security guards reach through the window of our crew car, remove our work schedule from the dashboard, read it, return it, then stroll away. Later that afternoon, back in Washington, Paterno was telephoned by a man representing himself as an aide of New York Senator Daniel P. Moynihan, whom we were scheduled to interview at 5:00 P.M. The caller said that the senator was having "second thoughts" about doing the interview because he and his family had been subjected to harassment by LaRouchians in the past. Half an hour later the "aide" called back, raising questions about how thorough our report would be. Had we talked to the FBI, the CIA, the IRS? Paterno and I assured him that we had. After this call, Paterno looked worried. The man we had just spoken to, she said, sounded very different from the one with whom she had set up the appointment. I called Senator Moynihan's office and, to my surprise, learned that the interview had been cancelled by someone purporting to be from NBC.

The interview was rescheduled for 5:30 P.M. When I and my associates arrived at Moynihan's office, the senator showed me a press release that had just arrived from LaRouche's political organization, the National Democratic Policy Committee. It stated: "Fat [sic] Lynch to interview Moynihan today" — information that could only have been obtained from the work schedule perused by the security guard. (The videotape of this interview was admitted into evidence at the Virginia trial and portions of it were played for the jury.)

After the interview I called an NBC lawyer in New York. *NBC Nightly News* was airing a report that evening on LaRouche and the lawyers were facing problems of their own. They had received a hand-delivered letter from LaRouche's lawyer in Boston threatening legal action if the network aired its segment that night and went ahead with its plan to air the longer report I was preparing, which was scheduled to be

Leader LaRouche and guarded estate: *LaRouche, shown here speaking in a 1982 NBC interview, lives in Leesburg, Virginia. Guards are reportedly armed; security on the estate is strict.*

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hown on March 4. The letter contained good deal of information that reflected nowledge of what Paterno and I had old "Senator Moynihan's aide" earlier nat afternoon. (This letter was also introduced as evidence at the trial.)

This use of a bogus phone call to elicit information that the LaRouchians could use for ends of their own reminded me of what Sara Fritz had told me earlier hat week in a taped interview. Fritz, who was then White House correspondent for *US News & World Report* and who now covers Congress for the *Los Angeles Times*, had told me how in 1981 a LaRouchian woman had impersonated her to obtain important interviews, which then appeared under that woman's by-line in various LaRouche publications. *US News & World Report* sued and won an injunction against the offending publications. I suggested to our lawyers that, should LaRouche follow through on his threat to sue NBC, the network should countersue — which is what happened.

(Asked for comment about the practices described in this article, LaRouche replied through an aide that he would speak only about the *US News & World Report* case. What he said was: "I don't know anything about it and I never looked into it, but I do know that the liberal press uses undercover press practices that are abhorrent and beneath description.")

From January 30 on, several people who had served as sources for my *First Camera* report began to receive strange phone calls. One was Lynn Cutler, vice-chair of the Democratic National Committee. Her caller identified himself as "Scott Lewis," my researcher. "Lewis" told her that I was concerned that NBC was "slanting" my story by suppressing information about the Reagan administration's links to LaRouche. Cutler believes that the imposter was trying to get her to file a complaint against the network for biased news reporting so as "to create problems for the Republicans and the Democrats."

A few days later, Cutler received another phone call, which she found vaguely menacing since the caller seemed to have inside information about her daily schedule. "We know you are going to be interviewed by Pat Lynch," the caller said, and then hung up. (LaRouche and his followers have targeted prominent Democrats for harassment and vilification for several years, although LaRouche himself is at least nominally a Democrat. Portions of videotapes showing LaRouchian harassment of Mondale, which I had obtained for my broadcast, were played for the federal jury.)

Another source of mine contacted by the LaRouchians was Ken Paff, national organizer for Teamsters for a Democratic Union, a reform group that has often been smeared by LaRouche publications. Once again the caller claimed to work for me. He said he needed to know more about the tactics LaRouche organizations used to discredit the TDU. Paff says that he provided the caller with some information but was suspicious. In this case, apparently, the LaRouchians were simply fishing for information about the scope of my report.

A third source was Ken Lawrence, a Mississippi-based authority on extremist groups of the far right. Lawrence confesses, ruefully, to having been completely "taken in" by a caller who claimed to be "Rick Winslow, who works for NBC and the program *First Camera*." "Winslow" wanted information about LaRouche's ties to various right-wing groups in the South, as well as information about anti-Klan activists. Eager to be of help, Lawrence gave "Winslow" the names of several sources, some of them very sensitive, as well as a good deal of background information.

Still another of my sources was Lenny Zeskind, a Missouri-based expert on the far right. Zeskind, who says he has been pestered by LaRouchians for years, was suspicious almost from the start when, in February of last year, he received a call from a man who claimed to be my boss. This fictitious executive producer confided to Zeskind that I had become "a worry" as a result of the libel threat, adding that my work was often marred by inaccuracies. Zeskind played along with the man, who went on to call my journalistic ethics into question by asking Zeskind — a source, not a contracted researcher — whether he had been paid yet for his services. (NBC guidelines prohibit paying sources for information.) "Prepare a bill," the caller urged after learning that Zeskind had not been paid. (A few days later Zeskind informed me of this curious conversation.)

The thoroughness with which the LaRouchians pursued their tactics was impressive. Gerry Gable, for example, is chairman of the London-based company that publishes *Searchlight*, an investigative monthly that focuses on the activities of extreme right-wing groups; Shimon Samuels is the director of the Anti-Defamation League's European office in Paris. Gable says that, starting in March 1984, he received a number of calls from "Pat Lynch of NBC," asking for the names of contacts who could help her do a follow-up piece on LaRouche and his anti-Semitism. One name Gable provided was that of Shimon Samuels, who subsequently received calls from "Pat Lynch." (It was when this caller asked Gable for contacts in the U.S. that his suspicion was aroused. As he said in a sworn affidavit: "I thought this was rather strange as she is an American correspondent for an American television network who . . . presumably had more than adequate sources of her own in America.")

Many other journalists have found themselves the victims of LaRouchian trickery, the purpose of which in most instances is to make people reveal information they would not normally divulge or to gain access to people who might not speak to a LaRouchian. According to several defectors from LaRouche organizations, much of the gossip and information that is either published or sold to foreign intelligence agencies or passed on to high-level U.S. bureaucrats and intelligence officials for political reasons is gained by interviews in which the caller poses as a journalist. The results are sometimes striking. Dr. Norman Bailey, who until December 1983 was a special assistant to the president and the National Security Council's senior director of international economic affairs, has called the LaRouche operation "one of the best private intelligence services in the world." (Asked on my *First Camera* program if LaRouche had any influence on President Reagan or on his policymakers, Bailey replied: "Well, I think that some people other than myself used him before and continue to use his organization

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a source of information, yes.")

Among the journalists who report ıving had unpleasant experiences with e LaRouchians are:

Free-lance journalist Dan E. Moldea. loldea is the author of *The Hoffa Wars*, critical look at the Teamsters Union, ıith which the LaRouche organization ɔportedly has close ties. In 1981, Mol-ea recalls, he was called by a "jour-alist" whom he was led to believe orked for *Time* magazine. On the basis f this belief, he provided the caller with uite specific information about "orga-ized crime ties to members of the Rea-an administration." Later, Moldea ays, "that interview appeared word for vord in a LaRouche publication."

☐ John Rees, an ultraconservative who ublishes *Information Digest* (where the harge was first made that the nuclear-reeze movement was orchestrated by he KGB). Rees says that he provided the names of several law-enforcement contacts, as well as background information about terrorism, to callers he later concluded must have been LaRouchians. "They would call and say they represented the International Press Service at the National Press Building," Rees recalls. "It sounded so authentic. Anyone would be fooled." (Rees is one of scores of Americans who, according to the LaRouchians, have links to the KGB.)

☐ Arnaud deBorchgrave, a former senior editor and chief correspondent at *Newsweek*; the co-author of *The Spike*, among other books; and a partner, with Rees, in the publication of a confidential intelligence newsletter called *Early Warning*. For several years, deBorchgrave says, he has been the victim of bogus phone calls which he attributes to the LaRouchians. (LaRouche publications routinely call him "a KGB agent of influence.") Recently, deBorchgrave says, he received a call from a woman who claimed she worked for the Rand Corporation. "She was seeking information on the Bulgarian-KGB connection in the attempted assassination of the pope," he recalls. When he invited her to come to Washington and show her credentials, adding that he believed she was a LaRouchian, she hung up. Later, he says, several people representing themselves as Arnaud deBorchgrave used the name as an entrée "all over the world." And, for years, he adds, someone has been running up large bills in his name in France — a piece of intelligence passed on to deBorchgrave by the French police.

Arnaud deBorchgrave, author

'Several journalists report having had unpleasant experiences with the LaRouchians'

John Rees, publisher of Information Digest

CJR Lou Mack

Mark Arax, formerly with the Baltimore Sun, *now with the* Los Angeles Times

CJR Harlee Little

Jerome Watson, Chicago Sun-Times

☐ Ed Kayatt, publisher of a New York weekly called *Our Town*. "In 1979," Kayatt says, "I gave out background information on a hard-hitting series we did about LaRouche to a man who said he was counsel for *The New York Times*." When Kayatt tried to reach the lawyer at the *Times* he learned that, while the *Times* did employ a lawyer whose name was that used by the caller, the lawyer had not telephoned Kayatt. "I have no doubt it was a LaRouchie who tricked me," says Kayatt, who had been twice sued, unsuccessfully, by LaRouche and his followers for $85 million.

☐ Jerome Watson, White House correspondent for the Chicago *Sun-Times*. Watson succeeded in tracking down the caller who impersonated him. He says that Hal Levy, then press secretary for Senator Adlai Stevenson III, received a phone call from "Jerome Watson" around 1979. "Levy knew my voice so he called me right away," Watson recalls. "I called the number the imposter gave Levy and asked for myself. A man picked up and said, 'Hi, I'm Jerome Watson.' 'No, you're not,' I told him, and he hung up." Watson traced the number to a LaRouche organization.

Sometimes the Larouchians' tactics can damage a journalist's career. Free-lance journalist Charles Fager is a case in point. He became a target of the LaRouchians, he says, while he was preparing an article about LaRouche for Boston's *The Real Paper* in the early 1970s. Fager believes that a combination of physical and legal threats caused the paper to spike his article. Then, around 1980, by which time he was working for Congressman Paul McCloskey of California, he began receiving what turned out to be bogus phone calls. One caller identified himself as a researcher for a think tank that was seeking information about LaRouche; another identified himself as a reporter for Allied Features "with offices in the National Press Building." Fager says that soon after he had given these callers information both about LaRouche and about himself, a "dossier" labeling him a "KGB mole" started circulating around Capitol Hill. "It was embarrassing," says Fager. "I found myself on the defensive." An FBI investigation carried out at Fager and McCloskey's request cleared Fager, but, says Fager, who no longer works for government, the smear hurt because it made him "controversial."

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Sometimes the tactics show a sophisticated sense of newsroom realities, seeking to discredit a reporter in the eyes of his editor and his sources as well. Consider the case of Mark Arax, which, like that of Charles Fager, was put before the federal jury. In 1982, Arax was doing the reporting for a series of articles critical of Lyndon LaRouche's campaign financing for the Baltimore *Evening Sun*. Arax, who is now with the *Los Angeles Times*, recalls: "My managing editor began to get telegrams and phone calls from my sources claiming that I had treated them poorly." Managing editor John M. Lemmon, who did not believe that a trusted reporter could have acted in the way described by the callers, discussed the problem with Arax. Subsequently, both reporter and editor started calling Arax's sources and discovered that, in some cases, people whose voices did not resemble Arax's had been calling his sources and speaking in an abusive manner while, in other cases, bogus sources had called Lemmon to complain of precisely such abusive behavior. "Fortunately," says Arax, "I had an editor who trusted me."

Occasionally, LaRouchian "actors" meet their victims face to face. In February 1984, Terry Dalton, state editor of the *Centre Daily Times* in State College, Pennsylvania, was visited by a LaRouche camera crew. Members of the crew implied that they worked for NBC and came into the Dalton house with cameras rolling. "I was subjected to a series of accusations and increasingly hostile questions from the man holding the microphone," Dalton recalls. (Dalton had written two stories about a local woman who had been persuaded to run for Congress as a LaRouche candidate but had withdrawn from the race.) Dalton says that the reporter, who identified himself as Stanley Ezrol, accused him of making "abusive" phone calls to the candidate, then interrogated him about why he had written "negative" stories about Lyndon LaRouche. Dalton says that the question he found most "chilling" came at the end of Ezrol's interview: "Have you ever feared for your personal safety?" Before the LaRouchians left, Dalton persuaded Ezrol to produce a business card. It bore the name of a LaRouche publication: *Executive Intelligence Review*.

One month after Dalton's encounter with the LaRouchian camera crew, Arch Puddington of the League for Industrial Democracy was ambushed by a three-person crew that arrived uninvited at his office in New York City. A woman asked why he was "undermining" LaRouche's presidential campaign. Members of the crew raised questions about his having written for *National Review*, a publication the LaRouchians detest. "They asked me whether I had participated in pot parties on [publisher] William Buckley's yacht," Puddington recalls. "Then they spent a lot of time impugning the reputation of free-lance writer Dennis King, saying he had 'low moral character' and was a member of the illegal drug lobby."

Dennis King, who has written extensively about LaRouche and his followers, has been harassed by them for six years and has been sued three times. King recalls two face-to-face encounters with LaRouchians. "A man who introduced himself as David Feingold from the AFL-CIO struck up a conversation with me on a shuttle flight down to Washington," says King, who edits *New America*, a bimonthly published by the Social Democrats, USA. After telling King that he was concerned about the LaRouche "menace," the man tried to draw him out. King later called AFL-CIO headquarters and learned that no such man worked for the organization. He was subsequently able to identify the man as a LaRouche follower named Herbert Quinde from photographs supplied by *The Hartford Courant*.

Quinde also tried to fool NBC correspondent Brian Ross and producer Bob Windrem. Using the alias Herb Kurtz — who described himself as a reporter for the Newark, New Jersey, *Star-Ledger* — Quinde tried to find out if Ross and Windrem planned to investigate the LaRouche organization. Windrem later identified "Kurtz" as a LaRouchian — again from a newspaper photograph.

Critic — and target — Dennis King

CJR/Harvey Wang

Patricia Lynch is a producer at NBC News.

Another LaRouchian, who called himself Jean Claude Adam and sometimes identified himself as a French defense ministry official, succeeded in duping reporters from coast to coast for several years because he looked and sounded so convincing. Dennis King, who arranged to have a photographer snap Adam's picture, was able to identify him as Laurent Murawiec, a follower of LaRouche since the early 1970s. In an *Our Town* article published four years ago, King stated that at least two foreign policy experts of some distinction, accepting "Adam's" bona fides, had granted him interviews.

"These guys are great imposters," says John Greenfield, a Boise, Idaho, labor lawyer and former state chairman of the Democratic Party who was also duped by a LaRouchian. "They ought to be in show business." Greenfield's brush with the LaRouchians occurred in June 1984. One day, he recalls, he got a call from a man who identified himself as "an L.A. *Times* reporter." The caller asked him to describe his views on the party's arms control plank. The next day, says Greenfield, a LaRouchian was handing out leaflets at Boise State University that contained all the information he had given the "reporter."

Rick Shaughnessy, a reporter for the *Times-News* in Twin Falls, Idaho, tracked down the person who had distributed the leaflets. The man said his name was Don Pilson. Pilson admitted to having written the text of the leaflet but denied having impersonated a *Los Angeles Times* reporter. Asked why the LaRouchians used deception to obtain information, Pilson told Shaughnessy: "They probably would say 'Get lost' if we identified ourselves."

One former LaRouchian whom I interviewed last winter (and whose information was admitted into evidence) took a more sinister view of the practice. "We use our phones as weapons: to harass, to intimidate, to probe, to interrogate. You'd be amazed the kinds of things you learn by pretending to be someone important." ■

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Far left, far right — far out

Over the years, Lyndon LaRouche, who is sixty-two, would appear to have moved from the political left to the political right. Conservative publisher John Rees is one observer who thinks LaRouche has merely disguised his political beliefs to gain adherents and power. In a videotaped interview that was shown at the trial, Rees called LaRouche "a roast-beef Nazi: brown on the outside, red on the inside."

LaRouche certainly started out on the left. In 1948, he joined the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party and adopted the name of Lyn Marcus, said by some to be a play on the names of Lenin and Marx. In the mid-1960s, he formed a group of his own, the New York Labor Committee, which became a faction of Students for a Democratic Society and played a part in the 1968 student uprising at Columbia University. Splitting off from the SDS, the group took a new name — the National Caucus of Labor Committees — and preached the demise of capitalism. The name stuck; LaRouche's tactics changed.

Presidential candidate LaRouche: *He has run three times, on three different tickets.*

Wide World

In 1973, still claiming to be a leftist, LaRouche launched a campaign "to finish off the Communist Party." It was called Operation Mop-Up and it was violent. Squads of NCLC members beat up Communist Party activists, many of whom required hospital treatment. By the mid-1970s LaRouche's move to the right was well under way. In 1976, when conservative Republicans were voicing their contempt for Nelson Rockefeller, LaRouche discovered that he had "allies in the capitalist classes." It was in this period that he and his followers reportedly established ties with such right-wing groups as the Ku Klux Klan and Willis Carto's Liberty Lobby. Some LaRouchians underwent paramilitary training. Anti-Semitic rhetoric began to appear in LaRouche's publications.

Nineteen seventy-six was the year LaRouche made his first bid for the presidency. He ran on the U.S. Labor Party ticket. Four years later he ran as a Democrat. In 1984, after losing out in the primaries as a Democrat, he ran as an independent — and became much more visible than in the past. Candidate LaRouche obtained a total of more than $1 million in Federal Election Commission matching funds for the 1980 and 1984 campaigns. (His 1984 vote total was 78,773). Defectors from LaRouche organizations and experts who monitor the organizations' activities estimate that LaRouche and the NCLC may have spent as much as $20 million during the campaign year of 1984. The candidate kicked off his TV campaign in January 1984 with a $210,000 Saturday-night political commercial; the party subsequently purchased several half-hours of prime-time television.

LaRouche presently has about 450 hard-core followers in this country and some 600 abroad. In the past four years, his political beliefs have won him many more, if less fanatically committed, followers. This new constituency, sources say, includes farmers, union members, businessmen, clergy, legislators and government officials, and some law enforcement officers and intelligence buffs. While the National Democratic Policy Committee works to promote LaRouche's political ideas — these include a return to the gold standard, low interest rates, and rapid development of nuclear power and "Star Wars" technology — such groups as the Fusion Energy Foundation help to recruit new members attracted by its pro-nuclear stance and, in some cases, ignorant of other aspects of LaRouche's operation. Among the various groups here and abroad that draw new members are: the International Caucus of Labor Committees; the Schiller Institute, ostensibly set up to promote German-American unity; the Lafayette Foundation for the Arts and Sciences; and the Club of Life, an international political organization that started up as an anti-environmentalist and anti-population-control group.

Where does all the money come from? At trial, LaRouche claimed to know nothing about his organizations' financial activities. Some of the money comes from donations, some from the sale of intelligence reports to foreign countries. And some of the money comes from the sale of publications. Among them are *Executive Intelligence Review*, a weekly that costs $399 a year; *Investigative Leads*, a newsletter sent to police chiefs and members of law enforcement agencies; *New Solidarity*, the LaRouche newspaper, which comes out twice a week; and *The Campaigner*, a monthly theoretical journal. The Fusion Energy Foundation also publishes a glossy monthly, *Fusion*.

The NCLC also operates a book publishing company (the New Benjamin Franklin Publishing House), a commercial typesetting firm (World Composition Services), and a printing company (PMR). Another printing plant is being built, in Leesburg, Virginia.

Last fall, during the libel trial of *Lyndon LaRouche* v. *NBC*, LaRouche was asked about his financial empire. He replied, in part, "I have not made a purchase of anything greater than a five-dollar haircut in the last ten years," adding that he hadn't filed an income tax return for twelve years. *P.L.*

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